

NATIONAL CANNERS ASSOCIATION



Information Letter



FOR N. C. A. MEMBERS

No. 269

Washington, D. C.

August 4, 1928

CONTENTS

	Page		Page
Date set for tariff hearing on canned tomatoes and tomato paste	1093	Kinds of seed to be verified 1928-29..	1098
Imports of tomato products in June ..	1094	Advises trade on proper storage conditions	1098
Truck crop movement	1094	Foreign trade notes	1099
Farm prices	1095	Army in market for canned foods ..	1100
Business conditions	1095	Cabbage acreage in late states	1100
Trend of wholesale and retail trade..	1096	Publications of interest to canners ..	1100
Weather and crops	1097	Abstracts of Canning Technology ...	1100
Rates on Florida citrus fruits to be readjusted	1098		

Date Set for Tariff Hearing on Canned Tomatoes and Tomato Paste

The U. S. Tariff Commission announces that the public hearing in the investigation of the costs of production of canned tomatoes and tomato paste will be held at the Commission's office in Washington, beginning at 10 o'clock a. m., September 18.

While this date will probably not be satisfactory to all canners, it undoubtedly represents the best judgment of the Commission on the suggestions received from various tomato-canning sections of the country.

The Association has requested the Commission to send copies of their preliminary report on the cost of production studies to members of the Committee on Tomato Imports, to all presidents and secretaries of state or local canners' associations, and to the chairman and secretary of the Tomato Section. It was also recommended that a copy be sent to every canner of tomatoes and tomato paste in this country. If the Commission finds it impracticable to send out these reports unsolicited to all canners, copies will no doubt be available to any canner upon application to the Commission, or we will be glad to supply copies to our members, so far as practicable, through this office.

The Association's general counsel, Covington, Burling and Rublee, will be glad to assist the Association's Committee on Tomato Imports in going over the Commission's report, and to assist the committee in proper presentation of its case to the Commission at the time of the hearing.

It is probable that the Committee, of which Mr. Carl Scudder, Windfall, Ind., is chairman, will meet in Washington sev-

eral days before the hearing to make plans for proper presentation of witnesses and testimony to the Commission.

Imports of Tomato Products in June

While imports of canned tomatoes in June fell over a million pounds below those in May, they were still over a million pounds greater than in June of last year. For the first six months of the present year canned tomato imports totaled about 36,211,000 pounds, as compared with about 28,712,000 pounds in the first half of 1927.

Imports of tomato paste, on the other hand, were only 430,-489 pounds in June, as compared with 1,168,572 pounds in June, 1927. For the first half of the present year tomato paste imports amounted to about 4,692,000 pounds, as compared with about 6,982,000 pounds in the corresponding period of last year.

The imports, by months, during the first six months of 1927 and 1928, are shown in the following table:

	1927	Canned Tomatoes		Tomato Paste	
		Pounds	Value	Pounds	Value
January		9,296,877	\$494,207	1,445,927	\$132,615
February		5,489,552	314,841	936,467	98,369
March		4,896,876	271,350	1,287,905	121,256
April		4,609,082	270,073	1,226,185	146,938
May		2,458,147	158,872	814,628	96,624
June		3,121,532	137,596	1,168,572	113,237
Total		28,712,060	1,647,419	6,981,724	702,926
1928					
January		12,050,694	666,405	2,318,596	219,000
February		7,909,498	446,298	583,266	58,268
March		4,349,166	243,038	384,272	42,162
April		4,178,502	265,842	435,923	43,651
May		4,468,672	355,362	539,099	69,421
June		3,273,368	194,164	430,489	46,346
Total		36,219,900	2,071,109	4,691,645	466,848

Truck Crop Movement

Peach shipments during the week ended July 28 reached a high average of 1,300 cars daily, and were four times heavier than during late July last season, according to the U. S. Market News Service. Values dropped sharply, especially in Georgia and North Carolina shipping districts. Prospects of continued heavy movement do not lend much encouragement to the peach situation.

Shipments of string beans were very limited, but home-grown supplies are rapidly increasing. Plantings of beans of six fall shipping states are 20 per cent lighter than last season, or only 7,300 acres. Forwardings of cucumbers dropped to 260

cars during the week, chiefly from New Jersey, Delaware and Maryland. Most of the carlot supply of cabbage was coming from Virginia and Iowa, but only 140 cars were shipped.

Tomatoes were selling somewhat lower than the week before. About 640 cars of tomatoes rolled, and Tennessee, Ohio, Maryland and Missouri were the principal sources.

Fruit of various kinds was plentiful. Pear shipments from California increased to 1,340 cars. Apple forwardings decreased temporarily to 440 cars from the West and 400 from the East. Total movement of 28 fruits and vegetables decreased to 26,990 cars, which was 1,700 less than the week before, but fully 6,000 more than during the corresponding week last year.

CARLOT SHIPMENTS

Commodity	July 22-28 1928	July 15-21 1928	July 24-30 1927	Total this season to July 25	Total last season to July 30	Total last season
Apples, total	842	1,033	670	3,285	2,049	93,212
Eastern states	460	498	464	1,827	1,744	44,497
Western states	442	535	206	1,458	305	48,715
Cabbage	138	137	158	17,659	15,875	39,036
Cantaloupes	1,439	2,145	1,579	22,746	22,877	30,236
Cherries	87	69	61	2,480	1,396	1,460
Cucumbers	262	494	473	5,806	6,973	8,175
Mixed deciduous fruit ..	479	433	365	2,387	1,779	8,405
Mixed vegetables	511	484	679	21,947	21,940	35,045
Peaches	8,212	5,194	3,075	30,414	18,182	41,553
Pears	1,340	1,079	1,030	4,218	2,313	18,713
Peas	208	187	143	3,843	3,454	4,148
Peppers	40	35	32	2,532	1,856	2,824
Plums and prunes	172	181	220	2,991	2,308	5,983
String beans	9	7	46	6,825	5,371	6,481
Tomatoes	639	958	477	20,910	21,793	32,612

Farm Prices

The general level of farm prices showed no change during the period from June 15 to July 15, according to the Bureau of Agricultural Economics, remaining at 145 per cent of the pre-war level. During the month meat animals advanced 7 points, poultry products 7 points, and cotton and cottonseed 8 points, but these advances were offset in the computation by a decline of 10 points for grains and a decline of 12 points for fruits and vegetables. At 145 the index is 15 points above July, 1927.

Business Conditions

The volume of trade during the week ended July 28, as measured by check payments, was greater than a year ago, but smaller than in the preceding week, according to the weekly statement of the Department of Commerce. Operations in steel plants showed larger activity than in either prior period. The value of new building contracts awarded during the week was

larger than in either the previous week or the corresponding week of 1927. The index of wholesale prices showed no change from the previous week, but was higher than a year ago.

Loans and discounts to Federal Reserve member banks were lower than in the previous week, but higher than a year ago. Loans to brokers and dealers declined from the preceding week. Interest rates on time money again showed no change from the preceding week, but were higher than in the same week a year ago. Interest rates on call loans averaged lower than in the previous week, but were higher than a year ago. Business failures were less numerous than in either prior period.

CAR LOADINGS

	Total	Miscellaneous	Merchandise and L.C.L.	Other
Week ended July 31	1,033,816	409,900	355,731	268,185
Preceding week	1,024,534	407,242	353,627	263,665
Corresponding week, 1927	1,012,585	390,305	356,355	265,897
Corresponding week, 1926	1,078,193	391,972	354,401	431,820

Trend of Wholesale and Retail Trade

Sales of firms included in the Federal Reserve Board's index of wholesale distribution declined in June and averaged 3.5 per cent smaller than a year ago. Seasonal factors generally cause a decrease in wholesale trade between May and June; but this year decreases larger than the seasonal amount were shown for all reporting lines except meats and furniture. For the first six months of the year sales of reporting firms averaged about 1.5 per cent smaller than in 1927.

Merchandise inventories carried by reporting wholesale firms, as measured in dollar values, continued in about the same volume in June as in May and as in June a year ago. Changes in the sales and stocks of wholesale grocers, by districts, are shown in the following table, figures indicating percentage increase or decrease (—).

Federal Reserve District	Sales: June, 1928 compared with—		Stocks: June, 1928 compared with—	
	May, 1928	June, 1927	May, 1928	June, 1927
United States	0.9	— 3.9	— 1.7	— 6.5
New York	2.7	— 4.5	— 11.9	— 4.5
Philadelphia	0.3	— 5.7	— 4.2	— 1.4
Cleveland	0.4	— 2.5	1.1	3.9
Richmond	— 2.3	0.2	— 5.1	1.2
Atlanta	— 8.7	— 10.2	— 7.3	— 8.6
Chicago	1.5	— 5.7	— 7.5	— 5.9
St. Louis	— 9.7	— 9.1	3.1	7.5
Minneapolis	7.0	— 9.0	— 4.0	— 5.9
Kansas City	2.3	— 2.0	— 1.6	— 1.4
Dallas	— 3.4	7.1	— 10.9	2.7
San Francisco	7.1	4.2	— 3.5	2.5

Retail trade was seasonally smaller in June than in May, but the decline was less than usual at that season. Compared

with June a year ago sales this year were generally larger. As compared with June, 1927, sales of grocery chain stores were 16.5 per cent greater, while sales for the first half of 1928 were 22.8 per cent larger than for the first half of 1927. This increase in grocery chain stores reflects growth in the number of stores as well as changes in the volume of trade.

Weather and Crops

The week ending July 31, as a whole, was unusually warm in the far Northwest, where the mean temperatures were from 6 degrees to as much as 13 degrees above normal, and it was generally warmer than normal west of the Rocky Mountains, according to the U. S. Weather Bureau's weekly report. About seasonable warmth prevailed in the Atlantic coast area and the Gulf districts, but in most interior valley sections the period was 3 degrees to 6 degrees cooler than normal.

Rainfall was rather heavy in the lower Mississippi Valley, and generous to heavy in the interior of the west Gulf area. There were also some locally heavy rains in the south Atlantic section and parts of the north-central Great Plains, as well as in the Lake region. Elsewhere precipitation was generally light to moderate, with very little occurring in the Ohio Valley, over most of the northern Plains, and west of the Rocky Mountains.

In the interior valleys the latter part of the week was rather cool for best growth of warm-weather plants, but, in general, weather conditions east of the Rocky Mountains continued, as for several weeks past, favorable for agricultural interests. A general moderate, warm rain would be helpful over considerable sections of the interior, particularly in the extreme lower portions of the Ohio and Missouri Valleys, and additional moisture would be beneficial in some rather local areas in the Northwest and extreme Southeast. As a general rule, however, soil moisture remains more than usually favorable in the principal agricultural sections, as no extensive area is suffering from drought.

In the Atlantic coast area the weather was favorable for crop growth and also for farm work, while in the Northeast growth was satisfactory, but there was considerable interruption to harvest and haying by frequent showers. Harvest was delayed also in some late western portions of the Great Plains area, but, in general, this work made good advance in the Northwestern States. West of the Rocky Mountains the week was

favorable for irrigated crops, but the excessively high temperatures, especially in the far Northwest, were harmful to growing vegetation.

Rates on Florida Citrus Fruits to be Readjusted

The Interstate Commerce Commission, in a decision issued July 30, ordered a readjustment of the rates on Florida citrus fruits, effective October 10. The present rates are held to be unreasonable, and new rates are prescribed, which involve both increases and decreases. In connection with this decision the Commission announced that rates on vegetables and other commodities than citrus fruits, which have been subject of complaints filed with the Commission, will be dealt with in a later report.

Kinds of Seed to be Verified 1928-29

Origin-verification under the U. S. Seed Verification Service for the year closing June 30, 1929, will be continued for alfalfa seed, will be temporarily suspended for clovers and seed corn which were included the past year, and the privilege of issuing verified-origin seed certificates for alfalfa seed will be limited to all dealers who will, so far as possible, have all their alfalfa seed verified as to origin and will handle all their alfalfa seed on a verified-origin basis during that time.

Advises Trade on Proper Storage Conditions

In an effort to reduce the percentage of swells due to improper storage conditions, a cherry canner is this year attaching a notice to each of the invoices sent out, calling attention to the effect of high storage temperatures in accelerating corrosion, and asking the cooperation of the trade in obtaining proper storage conditions. The notice is as follows:

Cherries are classed with red perforating fruit, and all tin plate containers packed with such fruit are likely to become hydrogen springers and perforations after some little time in storage. High storage temperatures accelerate the corrosion of the container by such products to a great extent.

"The action of the acid upon the container is a chemical reaction, and chemists have shown that on the average the rate of speed of the chemical reaction is doubled by each 18 degrees Fahrenheit rise in temperature. For instance, if the cans of fruit are stored in a warehouse immediately under a tin roof where the average summer temperature is 120 degrees Fahrenheit, hydrogen gas is formed four times as fast, or, in other words,

springers and perforations are formed in one-fourth the time they would occur if the same fruit was stored in a suitable warehouse at a temperature of 84 degrees Fahrenheit. Springers and perforations, therefore, cannot be prevented in fruits that are stored in a hot warehouse. Serious losses from this source will not cease until buyers fulfill their responsibility in the matter and store at proper temperature all canned foods subject to springers and pinholing."

We ask your cooperation and trust you will aid in passing this information on to your trade. Some canners are already thinking of refusing to ship into territory where canned goods are not properly stored in cool, dry warehouses.

Foreign Trade Notes

The following items on the foreign canning industry and trade are from the weekly bulletin of the Foodstuffs Division of the Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce:

Canadian salmon fishery.—The salmon fishing conservation measures of the Canadian Government which are in effect this year, are said to be eliminating many of the chaotic conditions that previously existed in the industry, according to the American Consul at Vancouver, British Columbia. The reduction in fishing licenses and relatively restrictive regulations are declared to be increasing the individual catch of fishermen and enabling canneries to operate more economically.

Canned fruit in Scotland.—Australian and South African canned fruit packers have increased their volume of sales in Glasgow, Scotland, according to a report from the American Consulate in that city, and some of this gain has been at the expense of American products. Canned fruits, it is stated, are becoming a more staple article of food with classes in Scotland who formerly depended upon evaporated and dehydrated fruit and such articles as sago, rice and tapioca for dessert.

Fish trade in Malaya.—Imports of canned sardines into British Malaya in 1927 amounted to 7,618 short tons valued at \$1,264,203. Salmon imports totaled 863 tons. Over 98 per cent of the sardines came from America.

Marking canned vegetables for Martinique.—The American Consul at Martinique calls the attention of American exporters to the French requirement regarding the stamping of all containers of canned vegetables to show the country of origin. Recently difficulties have arisen over shipments to Martinique that have not complied with this requirement.

South African preserved fruit exports.—In March exports of canned pineapple from British South Africa totaled 407,345 pounds and of other bottled and tinned fruits, 196,988 pounds. As compared with March last year this was a decline of about 100,000 pounds in pineapple exports but a gain of about 176,000 pounds in other fruits.

Army in the Market for Canned Foods

The Quartermaster Supply Officer, First Avenue and 58th Street, Brooklyn, N. Y., has asked for bids, to be opened August 14, on various subsistent supplies including the following canned foods: Apples, lima and string beans, catsup, cherries, corn, milk, peaches, pears, pineapples, and salmon.

Copies of the schedule (Sub. 626-29-32) can be obtained by addressing the Supply Officer.

Cabbage Acreage in Late States

In the late states the commerical acreage of domestic cabbage, including that to be consumed by kraut factories, is estimated by the Bureau of Agricultural Economics at 25,940 acres; while the acreage in Danish cabbage is estimated at 31,660 acres. These estimates, combined with earlier estimates for other sections, give a total cabbage acreage of 134,460 acres, compared with 140,130 in 1927.

Publications of Interest to Canners

Blackberry leaf miner.—In the Information Letter for June 9, attention was called to the results of tests at the Geneva, N. Y., Experiment Station for the control of the blackberry leaf miner. The Station has now issued as Bulletin No. 133, a report on the biology and control of the blackberry leaf miner, furnishing detailed information on the subject.

Apple industry in Ohio.—The Agricultural Experiment Station at Wooster, Ohio, has issued as Bulletin No. 418, a 76-page report on the apple industry of Ohio. The bulletin discusses the trend of production in the United States, Ohio's position in the apple industry, varieties of apples raised, storage, distribution, and prices. The report contains detailed statistics, and a number of graphs.

Abstracts of Canning Technology

With this issue of the Information Letter there is being mailed to all members of the Association a copy of Abstracts of Canning Technology, Nos. 1 and 2, Vol. VI.